

# Social Action

A Magazine of Christian Concern

"We are living in a grand and awful period of history in which every illusion, nourished in past centuries, has brought forth its evil fruits; in which every new power developed by man, particularly in his conquest of nature, reveals its capacity for both good and evil; and in which the highest possibilities are inextricably intermingled with the most dire perils."

OUR MORAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES  
FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Reinhold Niebuhr

# Social Action

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# Editorial

## In This Issue

We are devoting most of this issue of *Social Action* to a Work Paper, and a discussion guide based upon it, on "Our Moral and Spiritual Resources for International Cooperation." We are privileged to print these documents through the courtesy of the staff of the U.S. National Commission for Unesco, under whose auspices they were prepared. The Work Paper was written by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, and the Discussion Outline was prepared by a subcommittee of the National Commission, of which the editor of *Social Action* has been chairman.

These papers are being published by the National Commission as part of a "Citizenship Consultations" project. Typically, the procedure starts with the organization of a Work Group of 15 to 25 persons in a university or college community, including both faculty members and lay people. The issue selected for study is made the subject of discussion in three to five sessions. Later, a Work Conference of 100 to 300 people is held, organized on a community, regional, or even a state basis, utilizing the results of the Work Group's explorations.

The purpose of the Consultations is stated thus:

"1. To extend the process of systematic study of international problems and increase the interest of citizen groups in helping to solve them. This applies particularly to the kinds of problems that are of concern to the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.

"2. To give the National Commission the views of representative citizens who are willing to study and discuss the problems presented. These views will assist the Commission in formulating its advice to the Government and in planning its own programs.

"3. To establish a better two-way flow of communication about these problems through local-state-national-international channels."

Thus far, three topics have been used in the Consultations:

The American Citizen's Stake in the Progress of Less Developed Areas of the World

The National Interest and Foreign Languages

The American as International Traveler and Host.

The topic we are presenting here is the fourth in the series.

It would be gratifying if church committees and study groups would utilize the Work Paper and Discussion Outline which follow, reporting the results to us or directly to the office of the National Commission in the Department of State, Washington, D.C.

## Migrating Industry

A new phenomenon seems to have appeared on the industrial scene. The technical name for it is decentralization, which sounds reasonable and harmless, but it may have socially momentous results in many communities.

The Editor was much impressed sometime ago by the social concern which officials of a large industrial corporation expressed over the con-

sequences, in human terms, of plant removal. It is not clear that big industry in general is so ethically sensitive to such considerations. At this moment public interest in the matter seems to center in a "strategic" question—the relation of relocation to national defense. There is good reason to think, however, that relocation of plants is dictated more by economic than by strategic considerations, and that the former are giving rise to a country-wide trend. Some of the factors operating are pointed out in a recent survey summarized in the *New York Times*.

"Rich reserves of natural resources have been developed in areas far from established industrial centers. That has proved a potent lure. So has the rapid expansion of electric power facilities along the Ohio, Tennessee, Columbia and other great rivers. "Low-cost transportation on inland waterways has been another magnet."

The social concern referred to above was for the community from which a plant is moved. Quite as important, and having possibly more long-range significance, is the way in which new industrial developments influence the life and well-being of thousands of families in communities that are being suddenly expanded and reconstructed. This may give rise to especially acute problems in cases where the incentive to relocate was a lower prevailing wage scale and absence of strong labor unions.

### **Delinquent Parents**

The New York State Commission on Youth and Delinquency recently came forward with a proposal to

"enforce parental responsibility." This rather novel—not to say naive—suggestion for combatting juvenile delinquency prompted Robert W. Searle, Chairman of the Mayor's Committee on Probation in New York City, to pen a wise "letter to the editor." Mr. Searle, himself a well known minister, points out that parental responsibility cannot be produced by threat of punishment. "Genuine parental responsibility arises from love. Love cannot be commanded."

In many cases, he says, the child concerned has been "rejected" and the family has "lost the capacity to be helpful." In such cases the remedy must be effected "in spite of the family." Mr. Searle finds crucially applicable here Dr. Sandor Ferenczi's prescription: "the indispensable healing power of therapeutic love." And in the case where the family fault is due to ignorance and is therefore remediable, as Mr. Searle says, "the threat of penalty could be devastating."

Quite aside from the danger of ill-conceived legal remedies for delinquency, is it not patent that no fixed line can be drawn between the responsibility of the home and that of the community as a whole or any of its agencies? We are continually hearing about the need for safeguarding the prerogatives of the home, and that is a valid concern. But our schools and churches and social agencies are continually doing educational and remedial work made necessary by family failure. The community itself must often stand *in loco parentis*, as the lawyers would say.

# Our Moral and Spiritual Resources For International Cooperation

By *Reinhold Niebuhr*

## I. The Challenge of Our Historical Situation

IF WE are to gauge the available spiritual, moral, political and cultural resources of our nation, which are available for the performance of our responsibilities at this fateful juncture of world history, it is advisable to begin with an analysis of the dominant trends and forces of contemporary history, which have created the unique perils and opportunities confronting us. We may divide these forces and tendencies, complex as they are, chiefly into five great historical movements.

The first is the increasingly rapid growth of technics which has transmuted every international problem into a global one by confronting us with a potential global community or at least with a world-wide interdependence of the nations.

The second is derived from the first. It is the series of technical developments which have made wars lethal in that every conflict threatens to become an atomic one. Thus statecraft is confronted with a hazard which no previous statecraft has faced. For a mistake or miscalculation may result in a degree of disaster never before imagined or imaginable in history.

The third factor is a demonic politico-religious movement which has beguiled millions of people and made many nations captive by generating a political dynamic through a compound of utopian illusions and power impulses.

Fourth, while all these developments were taking place our nation rose to the dizzy eminence of being the most powerful among the nations of the "free" world.

Fifth, the contest between the free world and modern totalitarianism must be conducted at great hazard because of the vast social and political revolutions on the continents of Asia and Africa where hitherto subject peoples are either fighting for or celebrating their independence. They are animated by deep resentments against the imperialistic impact of a technically powerful Western culture upon the weaker nontechnical nations of Asia and Africa. The resentments were the more virulent because the "white man's arrogance" was compounded with the pride of power in this initial encounter.

We must consider more fully these five basic tendencies and forces in the contemporary situation be-

fore proceeding to an estimate of our resources for meeting our peculiar problems.

### The Technical Revolution

THE development of technics and the corresponding enlargement of the international community is of course not a recent development. The whole history of mankind has been influenced by the gradual development of technical competence both in the mastery of nature and in the arts of communication. But these developments proceeded by geometric progression in the latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The airplane came into effective use in the First World War and the jet airplane was developed in the Second World War. This development symbolized the increasing triumph of time over space in recent years and the consequent narrowing of the world's dimensions. The development of the radio in the same period also enhanced the contiguity of the national communities with each other.

Furthermore, world trade increasingly made the economic life of the nations mutually interdependent. Thus, in the period between the two world wars, the whole world suffered from a depression in its economic life. It is unnecessary to say that this greater intimacy and interdependence of the nations did

not automatically create a world community for which the optimists of the previous century hoped. It created the possibility of such a community but also the possibility of enlarging every conflict between communities. In short, technical progress accentuated all problems of community and gave them new dimensions. We have to solve our international problems within the new dimensions established by an ever more successful technical civilization.

### The Atomic Age

THE second development is really a part of the first but it has such a significance that it deserves special mention. The development of nuclear physics and the consequent invention of atomic weapons of warfare are certainly an aspect of the triumph of technics. But there is a special significance in this development which prompts people to speak of our age as an "atomic age". The first bomb dropped on Japan was followed in quick succession by the report of the failure to outlaw atomic weapons through international action, the creation of bigger atom bombs, the report that Russia had learned how to make them, the development of the hydrogen bomb, and the subsequent report that Russia also was privy to this most dread of all secrets. This rapid succession of events was a clear indication of the speed at which modern history moves in all areas, but—ironically enough—particularly in the development of instruments of mutual annihilation. In less than a decade it became apparent that if another world war should occur it would be

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fought with weapons of such monstrous destructive power as to leave even the victor, in Mr. Churchill's phrase, an empty victory "in a universe of ruins". War meant mutual devastation in which the difference between victory and defeat might be slight indeed. Thus to all the dimensions of our contemporary international problems this dimension of possible mutual destruction was presented to a generation which had only recently dreamed of historical progress.

History is rather more unpredictable than we had imagined in past centuries and even in recent decades. Everyone thought that an armament race on the level of nuclear weapons would inevitably lead to war, even though such a war might mean mutual annihilation. But in recent years it has become apparent that the very hopelessness of preventing any war from becoming an atomic one has become the only real source of hope that war may be prevented. Thus the dogma that armament races must inevitably lead to war has been challenged; and the hope of the scientist Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, that the destructiveness of modern weapons would prevent war seems to have been belatedly justified after history seemed to make sport of such a hope for almost a century. At any rate, it is apparent that the present relaxation of tensions in the world is due to the realization on each side that any conflict might become one of global dimensions and that such a global struggle would also inevitably be an atomic war. Thus in Mr. Churchill's phrase "security has become the

child of terror and survival the twin brother of annihilation."

### **International Communism**

THE third significant development of modern history which has accentuated what would in any case have been a very large problem of the integration of a potential world community is the growth of the most dynamic and demonic world politico-religious movement in history. International communism has developed aspects both qualitatively and quantitatively that are among the most unpredicted forces in the contemporary scene. For the communist movement has managed to compound power lusts with utopian dreams in such a way as to give its totalitarian practices a dynamism and a plausibility which no one could have foreseen in this age which prides itself on its enlightenment.

Communism is not fortuitous corruption of the Maxist dogma, for its aberrations are directly derived from some of Marx's miscalculations in regard to the nature of man and human society. Its fury of self-righteousness and its vast monopolies of power against whose pretensions and aggressions there are no checks are directly derived from Marx's utopian vision of an innocent mankind, to be realized once the corruption due to the institution of property was removed. Yet, Marx would probably have been horrified by the realities of the communist empire and would also most probably have suffered the fate which the early bolsheviks suffered at the

hands of Stalin in the purge trials of the thirties.

In short, the dream of the utopians of the past century turned into a nightmare of tyranny, not fortuitously, but also not by any conscious intent. Fortunately the nations with a technical civilization were able to correct the injustices of their earlier industrialism and to perfect the balance of power in both their political and economic life to such a degree that they attained a measure of health which could serve as an antidote to the communist poison. The false panacea generated in, and designed for, a technical society could find no foothold there. But it did find lodgement in the feudal-agrarian nations, first in Russia and then in China, so that communism dominates a great part of the world measured in either square miles of territory or in population.

IT WOULD be difficult to estimate the proportions of illusion and cynicism in the compound of motives that move the oligarchs of the present communist imperium. They must know that the power realities do not conform to the original dream. But they may, for all we know, cling to shreds of the dream in order to validate their ambitions in their own minds and in those of their victims. They have at any rate enough remaining illusions to make their power very dangerous. For in their eyes (at least until the atomic threat became serious) it was not necessary to concern themselves with the problem of mutual accommodation between foes or competitors or with that of integrating a divided

world community. For they were privy to an historical logic which promised their cause victory over all its foes. These illusions even more than the unacknowledged power lusts impart a very dangerous irresponsibility to the foes of the free world and render the enmity which separates the communist and the free world doubly dangerous.

The communist danger is greater than the previous Nazi one for various reasons. According to the Stalinist revision of the Leninist revision of Marxism the first nation to have a successful revolution is in honor bound to come to the aid of still "enslaved proletarian" classes in the capitalist nations by military might and seek to "liberate" them. In short, no military venture is excluded from the strategy of communism. We have had several experiences with these military thrusts of the communist power, most recently in Korea and in Indo-China. Nevertheless, communism does not, as did Nazism, rely primarily on military power. It is primarily a conspiratorial movement relying on infiltration and revolutionary strategies to accomplish its ends. Furthermore, it is not handicapped by the obvious nationalistic and racial pretensions of Nazism and is therefore not inhibited from posing as the "liberator" of "subject" nations in any part of the world. Russian nationalism or Chinese nationalism may be compounded with its universalistic pretensions, but this fact does not offer any initial hazard to its propaganda purposes. We are therefore confronted with a foe who can avail himself of every political as well as

military weapon in the pursuit of his ends and who can obscure the unscrupulousness of his methods with idealistic pretensions. There has probably never been a more formidable and widespread political movement in all history than the movement with which we are confronted.

### **The Primacy of American Power**

THE fourth great historical movement that concerns us in describing our contemporary situation is the phenomenal rise of our own nation to the position of undisputed leadership in the world of free nations. This rise has been so phenomenal and rapid that one of our real problems as a nation is to become conscious of the degree of our power and of the responsibility which is the concomitant of power. Before the First World War we were content with our continental security and rather indifferent to the perils and opportunities of the world scene. We were also unconscious of the fact that a part of our security was not due to our continental isolation but was parasitic on the British navy. The whole international situation was economically and politically relatively stable because Britain, as the leading industrial nation and as the greatest naval power, "policed" the European world, or rather managed a precarious "balance of power." This relative peace was ended by the first German challenge to the whole equilibrium. The resulting war found us reluctant to participate in the hostilities though it soon became ap-

parent that our national interests would be imperiled by a German victory. We entered the war peripherally and subsequent American policies seemed to make it clear that we were determined never to enter another European war.

This determination showed that we were not aware either of the growth of our power or of the destruction of our continental security through the technical developments we have already discussed.

The second threat to the European community from a German tyranny proved to be both morally and politically more dangerous to us than the first one. But it did not immediately alter our fixed neutralist determination, which was embodied in much legislation designed to prevent our involvement in another war. Indeed we could probably not have followed the clear dictates of both our conscience and our national interest if Japan had not catapulted us into the war by her attack on Pearl Harbor.

THE exertions of the war dissipated our neutralist illusions. When the war was over we emerged not only incomparably the most powerful of the free nations but committed to responsibilities commensurate with our power. The war did not suddenly increase our strength. On the contrary, our industrial production had been slowly increasing from 11 per cent of the world's industrial production in 1899 to 29 per cent in 1950. But the war did suddenly increase our military power and political prestige, chiefly because our economic plant

was not impaired by the war and our productivity increased remarkably through the exertions of the war. In consequence, we proved at the end of the conflict to be the only nation with sufficient economic power to sustain the military force that was required to "police" the world and to help the impoverished economies of Europe so that they would not fall prey to the communist virus.

Fortunately, immediate responsibilities proved to be more persuasive than abstract theorizing. Therefore the isolationist temper of the nation was dissipated completely and we moved from continental security to the position of the strongest nation in an alliance of free nations, forced to confront a worldwide communist threat. History probably records no more rapid transformation of a national ethos than the one that was accomplished among us in the Second World War and the subsequent period. Nations which only yesterday feared or affected to fear our lack of a sense of continuing responsibility now have the contrary fear that we will not be flexible enough in leading the free world in its long exertions through a period of not so peaceful co-existence. We are not altogether persuaded of the genuineness of these fears, being suspicious that the envy of our fortune may predispose the nations poorer than we to engage in these critical judgments of our character. But in any case the rise of America to this position of world leadership has been phenomenal in both the rapidity of the development and degree of power and

prestige which we have gained. It is one of the major factors in the contemporary world situation.

### **Revolutionary Ferments**

**T**HE fifth development of which we must take account is the revolutionary ferments that are agitating the Asian and African continents, which complicate the encounter between the free world and communism. On these continents the nations are ethnically "colored". Their culture may be primitive or highly developed, but in any case their technical development has been retarded in comparison with the western nations. Our contest with communism on these continents is complicated by three factors which must prove hazards to any immediate success of our cause and which require a great deal of patience and expiation of past sins on our part.

First, there is the resentment felt by the colored peoples of the white man's long tradition of arrogance toward the peoples of darker pigment. This resentment is an embarrassment to our own nation particularly inasmuch as our past treatment of the Negroes, though rapidly changing, gives the communist propaganda many targets for its arrows.

Secondly, resentment is felt by the "colonial" peoples against the initial impact of a technical civilization upon a non-technical one. That first impact resulted in the application of the superior technical power of the western nations for the purpose of bringing the non-technical cultures into the orbit of the powerful

nations either as the source of raw materials or as markets for new industrial enterprise. This "imperialism" was at times politically implemented and at times availed itself of economic means alone. In any case, it wounded the self-respect of the subject peoples and they feel and express their resentments even in a day when the weakening of the western powers has led to the voluntary or forced emancipation of all the colonial peoples. These resentments are most sharp and vivid in the contemporary scene in such nations as Indo-China, where French imperialism beat such a tardy retreat that it played into the hands of the communist aggressors.

Thirdly, the present impact of a technical civilization upon these older organic cultures tends to destroy their organic forms and to render the feudal structure of their society morally and politically untenable. On the other hand, they can hardly acquire in a few decades the delicate balances of power in both the economic and political spheres by which democratic justice and liberty are achieved and which the western nations required about four centuries to learn.

THE disintegration of a feudal or even a tribal social order under the impact of modern technics coupled with the inability to create a democratic order in so short a time is the greatest of the hazards which the free world faces on the two continents in its contest with communism. A democratic political order resting on the "consent of the governed" requires a literate and in-

telligent electorate and some force of social cohesion strong enough to permit the stresses and strains of democratic diversity of opinion. In western history the "middle class" of professional and business people, who are not economically dependent upon a "lord", were the primary agents of this political development. But justice in a technical society requires not only a broad base of political power, inherent in universal suffrage; it requires also balances of power in the economic sphere, such as developed in the trade union movement in western society. Without such balances the centralization of power in industrialism may, as in our earlier industrial history, aggravate the injustices of the traditional society and create the resentments and confusions upon which communism feeds. It must be remembered that the recently emancipated nations are subject to the very conditions which gave the Marxist dogma its plausibility in 19th century Europe, and which occasioned some of the earlier communist triumphs in Europe before a viable justice under conditions of freedom made the European community essentially immune to the communist virus.

For these reasons we must expect some initial defeats on these continents as we have experienced them in China and Indo-China. We must not expect these recently emancipated peoples, much as they enjoy their collective freedom from imperialism, either to value, or to be competent in manipulating, the civil freedom of an open society. They may therefore move from the collec-

tivism of an organic society to modern totalitarianism without being aware of the danger in this new collectivism. They may fancy that there is a greater affinity between communism and the old society than between the old organic communities and the complex realities of the political and economic life in modern democracies. This gives communism an initial advantage over us even though history proves the new collectivism to be a grievous tyranny, which makes the old imperialism seem benign by comparison.

In nations like India which have had some experience with democracy but which harbor many resentments against past subjection, a neutralist reaction to the conflict between western democracy and communism is a rather natural, if not an inevitable, policy.

### **The Resulting Challenge**

**I**F WE summarize the contemporary situation which our nation faces we can succinctly express our dilemma in this way: We have been called into leadership of the free nations at the moment in history in which a potential world community is forming but has not yet been actualized. Every problem of the world community is aggravated by the world-wide influence of the communist movement, having its power center in Russia but possessing tremendous influence through-

out the world and availing itself of every conspiratorial, as well as military, weapon to enhance its power. We must wrestle with this dangerous foe with courage but also with caution because there is always the danger that local conflicts may become global and that any such war will become an atomic one with mutual annihilation as a possible consequence.

We have this position of leadership in the free world chiefly by reason of our tremendous economic power and our consequent military might. We must exercise our leadership of the free world in the light of tremendous complications in our contest with communism because the Asian and African continents are in ferment. Nationalistic ambitions and resentments because of previous subjection and the decay of agrarian social orders under the impact of technics all combine to make for political creativity, but also for confusion. They offer communism precisely the initial toehold which it briefly had in western civilization and which a greater measure of justice in our political and economic life tended to overcome. It will be recognized that this complex of historical conditions, including the brevity of our apprenticeship in world leadership and the swiftness of our rise to power, presents our nation with the most exacting challenge in our history and one more exacting than faced by any nation in world history.

## II. Our Moral, Spiritual, and Cultural Resources for Meeting the Task

### 1) The roots of our moral and spiritual resources.

**I**N ASSESSING the resources available to us in meeting this challenge we must begin by defining the *sources* of the resources. They consist of three factors: (a) the traditions of our history which do much to determine our behavior even as individuals are influenced by their own peculiar history; (b) the religious traditions which inform the cultural life of our nation and set the ultimate standards upon the basis of which we make our immediate decisions; (c) the sum total of our cultural and scientific disciplines which enable us to weigh and gauge all the political, social, and moral factors which enter into our situation.

We must not define our "spiritual" resources too narrowly in traditional religious terms. We can not forget that the very creation of our free society was the joint achievement of religious and "secular" forces.

The religious heritage supplied the realism which distrusted sinful man to such a degree that no position of power in the community was allowed to remain unchecked or unchallenged. The distinguishing mark of Anglo-Saxon democracy is precisely the rigor with which even the power of majorities is checked in the interest of minorities, and every kind of political power is made responsible. It can be safely said that

this was the achievement of Christian radicalism as compared with the more rationalistic utopian radicalism of France. In our own country this realism was introduced particularly by the author of our Constitution, James Madison. Without this realism the democracy of France soon degenerated into Jacobin fanaticism and ultimately to Bonapartist absolutism. The religious forces rooted in the biblical faith also provided the ultimate and transcendent point of reference for the meaning of human existence, the faith in God which enabled men to say courageously, "We must obey God rather than men," to any community or any tyrant that tried to subject all human purposes to a social or political process. It gave man as a "child of God" the dignity to resist the fate of being merely an instrument of a process. This "dignity" was emphasized very much in all modern democratic theories, but the theories frequently outraged the very dignity which they affirmed.

In addition to the religious and spiritual resources of our historic faiths, we can without vainglory point to a unique aspect of American life which may be a resource to us now. This is our ethnic, cultural and religious pluralism and the comparative absence of resentment among the various religious groups. This lack of resentment is probably due to the fact that no group has official preference among us. At any rate even our European critics give

us credit for the virtue of tolerance. Our pluralistic society may help us in coming to terms with the inevitably pluralistic world society.

ON THE other hand, the secular disciplines, frequently so defective in their ultimate frame of reference, nevertheless provided the discriminating judgments which made it possible for modern men to analyze the complex problems of economic and political justice and to puncture the pretensions of religious people who sought to make religious faith an instrument of political power.

We can not deny this twofold source of the spiritual resources of a free and responsible society. And we will realize that we must use these two sources and their peculiar combination in our own national heritage, in order to come to terms with our international obligations.

In thus coming to terms with our international responsibilities it is necessary in almost every case to draw on the resources furnished us by the ultimate frame of reference in our religious heritage but also to avail ourselves of the various discriminations and judgments which are supplied by the social and political disciplines and by the journalistic media that put us as a nation in touch with the whole world. Since our power impinges upon so many places about which even the wisest of us have only minimal knowledge, the arts of communication and the achievements of journalism are as important to us as the more academic disciplines of our culture. We must develop the arts

of communication to such a degree that the exchange of thought and knowledge between the nations will become commensurate with the interchange of goods in our commerce and the impingement of power on our national life.

2) The application of our resources in the various issues confronting us.

If we define the sources of our capacities for dealing with our international problems so as to include both our religious heritage and our secular disciplines we will discover the relevance of this distinction in almost every area of application which we must now examine in detail. We shall note three major areas of application.

### **Realism Without Cynicism**

FIRST, we must develop a realism without cynicism which knows how to come to terms with the communist menace on every level where it is a danger to the world. Communism faces us as a military power and as a political force which uses every form of resentment and discontent as grist for its revolutionary mills. A realistic defense against communism must not be indifferent to the military threat, but must also avoid a too great emphasis on military power alone. Mr. Churchill has given it as his opinion that our superiority in atomic weapons is the chief factor in our security; and he is probably right. He also expressed the opinion that the superiority would last not much more than four years. Yet, as we noted earlier, there is now an obvious relaxation of tensions which leads to the conviction

that our security is established partly by our superiority in atomic weapons and partly by the fear on both sides of the consequences of an atomic war.

There is an ironic element in this development. We are now in the possession of the ultimate in weapons of warfare. Yet only a few decades ago a large section of our religious community was fearful of our involvement in any military encounter on the ground that such encounter would rob us of our innocence as a nation. The development of atomic weapons to the point of the hydrogen bomb for the sake of exercising our responsibilities toward the free world is the measure of our growing political and moral maturity. We now know that we can not be responsible without guilt. For all responsibility is exercised in a field where partial and fragmentary values are supported against contending forces, and the ultimate exercise of responsibility may involve the guilt of the destruction of life. We must be realistic enough to guard our liberties against any use of force by the foe.

**B**UT now, only a few decades after we were exercised about the use of any military weapons at all, we are under the opposite danger of relying too exclusively upon these weapons in general, and on atomic weapons in particular. A word must be said about each one of these temptations in turn.

A too heavy reliance on atomic weapons may be caused by the cheapness of these weapons in comparison with conventional military

equipment. Considerations of economy and a balanced budget might cause us to neglect standard military strength, including the infantry. But this kind of strategy would make us weak in a local encounter with the foe, such as we had in Korea, and would therefore increase the danger of a local conflict becoming a global one. One of the reasons for the opposition of some of the best nuclear physicists to the development of the hydrogen bomb was the fear of such a disproportion in our defense strategy.

The greater danger is that we will rely too much on military strength in general and neglect all the other political, economic, and moral factors which give unity, health, and strength to the nations of the free world. We are tempted to this false strategy by some interesting facets of our growth into a world power. We have previously observed that this growth was very rapid. This rapidity, combined with our lack of experience as an "imperial" power, made it difficult for us to gauge and appreciate the factors of prestige and traditional loyalty, of ethnic and linguistic sources of political cohesion, and all the complex political factors that enter into the forming of community and the acquisition of prestige and authority in the community, whether national or international.

**M**EANWHILE our economic power could be quickly transmuted into military power; hence the temptation to overemphasize it. This temptation became particularly grievous in the African and Asian

continents, involved in political ferment which we analyzed earlier. We can not preserve any anti-communist regime of the traditional pattern solely by the application of military power and we can not provide health for an emerging nation by the mere support of its military might if the budding nation has any reason to resent or to fear a remnant of western "imperialism" in its own life. Nor can we give such a nation political unity and health if there are not political capacities and sources of health already present in inchoate forms in its life. We can not, in short, pretend to be omnipotent merely because we are powerful in military terms. Nor have we the power to remedy defects in the policies of some of our allies. The tardiness of the French, for instance, in giving Viet Nam independence was certainly responsible for the military defeat which the free world suffered there.

THE technical assistance program has given our nation a splendid opportunity to make one of its great resources available to our allies who are emerging from an agrarian economy and who are impoverished because of the low productivity of their economy and are tempted to attribute their poverty to "exploitation." Our nation is wealthy primarily because of the efficiency of our production in industry and not because of any exploitation of weaker peoples, though we must not deny that wherever strength impinges upon weakness there is danger of exploitation, consciously or unconsciously.

We must not, however, rely too much on raising the living standards of impoverished peoples as a weapon in our contest with communism. For the technical instruments by which we lift these standards have also the effect of breaking the old organic forms of the traditional societies and exposing them to the perils of social chaos. In short, technical assistance can in some measure bridge the gap between the technical and non-technical cultures but it can not of itself telescope the four centuries of history which the technical cultures required to deal with their problems of social peace and justice.

### **Patience and Courage**

A SECOND major requirement is to develop patience and courage to outlast a tenacious foe in a long struggle in which the issue can never be allowed to come to a final arbitrament. Of all the tests upon our leadership this is probably the most difficult one. There are elements in our national history that make it very hard for us to pass this test.

Compared with other nations we have had a very brief history and during our short span of existence we have suffered no serious defeats, nor have we been subject to the kind of frustration that we now experience in our contest with communism, in which it is impossible to come to a clear-cut issue with the foe without involving ourselves and the world in catastrophe. It is very difficult for a young and vigorous nation lacking the experience of frustration to cope with the situation in which we are now involved.

Our resulting impatience is aggravated by certain notes in the secular portion of our culture. These are derived from the notion that the mastery of historical destiny waits only upon the proper scientific technics, and is not essentially different from the mastery of nature. The historical situation we now face, in which there can be no immediate or clear-cut victory for our cause nor any release for decades from the burdens and anxieties which we must bear, is therefore not according to the experiences of a youthful nation nor according to the hopes of a secular culture.

**I**N THIS situation we must draw upon the resources of our religious heritage. For the biblical faiths of our three major religious traditions have a clear knowledge of the fact that men and nations, however powerful they are, can never unambiguously master their fate. It is the fate of man, according to these faiths, that he always remain a *creative creature* and therefore both creature and creator of the historical process. This conception implies that men's and nations' ambitions are naturally subject to frustration, that human ends can never be satisfied precisely as men intend. The frustrations that we face as a nation may not have been foreseen according to our national experience but they are anticipated in the great faiths which look upon the human situation from within a frame of meaning which endows human history with significance but according to which all fulfillments of meaning are fragmentary and all meanings

are themselves partially obscured. History, in short, points beyond itself for its fulfillment. It is one of the causes of the communist evil that it is a secular faith which tries to complete history within itself. This utopianism becomes very dangerous when it is made the basis of a political program.

Men and nations are as far from omniscience as from omnipotence. A wise statecraft tries to foresee as much of the future as possible but it is also conscious of the limits of man's foreknowledge. The biblical maxim, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," is therefore an expression of true statesmanship. Such a maxim precludes strategies like "preventive" war. For all such strategies seek to prevent what is regarded as a clear future danger by resolute immediate action.

While the American people have not been trained for long in the school of patience, the support they have given President Eisenhower's moderate and pacific strategy proves that they have learned their lesson tolerably well, and that the criticisms of American policy on the ground that it is too heedless may soon be as outmoded as the previous criticism that our nation was incapable of continuing to carry responsibility. We have certainly allayed the real or supposed fears of our irresponsibility—arising out of our conduct between the two world wars—by our conduct since the end of the second war. We may yet prove ourselves as patient as we have proved ourselves responsible. That would be a double victory for

a nation which has traversed such a fantastic history in so brief a time.

### **Mutuality with Allies**

THIRDLY, we must summon our resources, both religious and secular, for the purpose of establishing real mutuality between ourselves and our allies, despite the great disparity of power and fortune between us. The task of relating our nation mutually to an alliance of free nations has two dimensions. The one would have existed even if our nation were not so powerful and fortunate. The other is given by the unique facts of our common life with other nations. This uniqueness is determined by the phenomenal dimensions of the American power and prosperity in comparison with the poorer and weaker nations of Europe and of Asia. Let us consider these two problems in turn.

1) The relation of the national interest to the mutuality between nations.

Even if our nation were not so powerful we should find it as difficult as do other nations to be interested in the welfare of the peoples beyond our national borders. The power of collective self-concern is older than America. The nation, as the most powerful community and therefore as the most potent bearer of this collective self-interest, is a comparatively recent development, but it is older than our own country. For the national community emerged from the disintegration of the medieval system of society and has been potent ever since. The power of collective self-interest presents us with a moral and political problem of great magnitude. It is

not easy for a nation to be concerned with any other nation in altruistic terms. The difference between individual and collective morality is immense and is established by the fact that collective self-concern is a compound of individual egotism, collectively expressed, and the spirit of loyalty and self-sacrifice of the individual which the community easily appropriates for its own ends. It was a dictum of George Washington that a nation was not to be trusted beyond its own interests; and on the whole this realistic advice has been the guide of all political science. But a mere consideration of the power of concern for the national interest easily obscures another side of the equation, namely, that self-concern can be as self-defeating in collective as in individual behavior. Nations as well as individuals stand under the law: "Whosoever seeketh to gain his life will lose it." In more concrete terms this means that a nation that is too preoccupied with its own interests is bound to define those interests too narrowly. It will do this because it will fail to consider those of its interests which are *bound up in a web of mutual interests* with other nations.

IN SHORT, the national interest when conceived only from the standpoint of the self-interest of the nation is bound to be defined too narrowly and therefore to be self-defeating. In both our secular and religious traditions there have been morally idealistic emphases which have recognized this aspect of man's collective life and have sometimes

gone so far as to define patriotism as a form of treason to the larger community. But this form of idealism was usually blind to the persistence of the factor of collective self-regard and to the impossibility of either suppressing it completely or of transmuting it. On the other hand, the "realist" reaction to what was regarded as sentimentality was usually blind to the self-defeating nature of pure self-regard. We must draw on the profounder sources in our religious tradition and of our secular disciplines to solve this problem.

There are two aspects in a tolerable solution. First, we must realize that it is not within the realm of moral possibilities to ask a nation to be "self-sacrificing." There are various reasons for this, including the fact that the government which sacrifices the interests of a nation for the "common good" is in a very different situation from that of the individual who may decide to subordinate or sacrifice his own interests for a higher value. The art of statecraft is to find the point of concurrence between the parochial and the general interest, between the national and the international common good. It does not occur to any statesman to define a desired policy in any other term but that of such concurrence; and to justify it in terms of "wise self-interest." Moralists sometimes suggest that this establishes a too sharp distinction between individual and collective morality; but it must be observed that a free society, in contrast to a tyrannical one, seeks to harness rather than to suppress particular indi-

vidual interests in establishing the common good. In our immediate situation this policy means that we must try to persuade the nation that what is good for the alliance of the free nations is good for our own nation *in the long run*. A prudent self-regard must obviously prefer long run to short run ends because there are too many conflicts of interest in the short run between the particular and the general interest.

BUT this "realist" approach to the problem of national morality is obviously defective, even if prudence insists on the long run rather than the short run in calculating the concurrence of interests. The defect arises from the fact that any kind of prudence which estimates common problems from the perspective of a particular interest will define the interest too narrowly. It is necessary, therefore, to draw upon another moral and spiritual resource to widen the conception of interest. The citizens of a nation must have loyalties and responsibilities to a wider system of values than that of the national interest—to a civilization for instance, to a system of justice, and to a community of free nations. These moral concerns will serve to leaven the mind of a nation and prevent a national community from defining its interest too narrowly. The sense of justice must prevent prudence from becoming too prudential in defining interest. Such a combination of "idealism" and "realism" is given in the great historic faiths. Without the insights of these faiths, realism may degenerate into cynicism and idealism

into sentimentality. They may even degenerate within the context of these faiths. But ideally the presuppositions of biblical faiths insist on both the moral imperative of the love commandment and the fact of the persistence of self-love in actual history. There is in these faiths therefore a safeguard against both sentimentality and moral cynicism. This must be made available to the nation in the present period of critical decisions in which we can not afford to disregard either the moral possibilities or the moral realities of our common life.

2) The problem of relating a very wealthy and powerful nation to weaker and poorer nations within an alliance.

THE general problem of mutuality between nations is aggravated in our case by the special circumstance that our nation is very fortunate and very powerful in comparison with the nations allied with us. This disparity places a special strain on mutuality and offers us special temptations to vanity and arrogance which militate against our moral prestige and authority. It also offers the other nations temptation to envy and resentment against our power and fortune — a temptation that would be present even if our policies were always exemplary. Our power is of course not solely a hazard to the mutuality of the nations in our alliance. It is also creative because it furnishes the nucleus of undisputed authority which is so necessary for the integration of an alliance, particularly one which still lacks sufficient constitutional instru-

ments of cohesion. Our undisputed power, whether wielded wisely or not, is certainly more conducive to unity than would be the divided power of two equally strong nations. The disintegration of the Delian League in the days of the rivalry for hegemony between Athens and Sparta, is an interesting lesson in history of the perils to unity in such rivalries. But the creative aspects of the hegemony of our nation must not blind us to the perils which inhere in the phenomenal superiority of our power and wealth. Every moral, cultural, and spiritual resource must be summoned to make such power sufferable to our allies and to ourselves.

The first resource must be a frame of meaning for the historical drama in which we are involved, one that will set the power of our nation in proper perspective and prevent the individual citizen from viewing the nation and its power idolatrously as the source and end of his existence, and will guard against the arrogance and vainglory in which all powerful nations are tempted to indulge. We who are adherents of the great historic faiths believe that faith in a sovereign God "who bringeth princes to naught and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity," in a God whose majesty dwarfs the majesty of even the most powerful nation, is such a resource. The most perennial heresy in the life of mankind is the worship of the nation as if it were God. The empires of ancient history — Egypt, Babylon and Rome — frankly constructed religions which sanctified this false frame of meaning.

IT is not possible to do this explicitly in the framework of religions which acknowledge a divine sovereignty that is not dependent upon the pride and power of nations. But we must humbly acknowledge that nationalistic arrogance and vainglory have been expressed within the framework of the Christian and Jewish faiths. Therefore we can not declare that even a valid religious faith, which does not identify God with the Nation, is perfect proof against such arrogance. Therefore we need another resource beside the obviously religious one. That resource is furnished by every discipline which puts us in touch with the world, showing the effects of our policies upon other people and nations upon whom our power impinges.

It is necessary, for instance, to have a clear view of the British attitude toward our policies. Britain not only has accumulated experience and wisdom in foreign relations, which we must share as we did in fact share them in our yielding to the British insistence that there be a conference with Russia "at the summit." Britain is also the dominant power most clearly displaced by the rapid development of our hegemony. There are therefore bound to be some resentments against us in Britain, though it is significant that these resentments are more moderate than those in other, less powerful nations. We must know how our power impinges upon France—and incidentally moderate our impatience with French resentments. They are probably more virulent than those of any

other nation because France is a deeply frustrated nation. It has won a war but is in the process of losing its empire after spending much blood and treasure to save it. The losses were undoubtedly due to the French tardiness in granting its colonial peoples genuine independence. But dwelling on this is not helpful now.

WE MUST know, also, about the effects of our policy in Germany, for that nation is moved by contradictory passions. It is the most consistently anti-communist nation on the continent, but it also fervently desires unification in its own national life. Only the most careful management of our alliance with Germany can prevent the passion for unification from militating against the desire to be our ally in western Europe.

It is even more important to have the closest communication, official and non-official, with the mind of the peoples of Asia. We must understand the reason for the neutral position of India and realize that this "neutralism" does not mean sympathy for communism, though it may imply some illusions about the nature of communism.

### The Hazard of Wealth

IN EVERY part of the world we suffer from the fact that our power impinges upon the lives of other peoples in ways of which we are unconscious. We are in fact not yet conscious at all of the extent of our power, in which we are unique among all the great powers of human history.

When we are conscious of our

power religious insight and feeling must operate to moderate the arrogance which the consciousness of power generates. It must set the power in a large frame of historical meaning in which the frailty of even the most powerful nation becomes evident and the fragmentariness of all human purposes is acknowledged. But in so far as we are not conscious of our power—of its extent, and of its effect upon other people—we need the help of all the disciplines of our culture, particularly those of good journalism, which make us aware of our place in the world. We can not afford to be a blind giant. It is taken for granted, of course, that the government has excellent intelligence reports and sees what is going on in every part of the world. But in a democracy even a strong government and one which has the people's confidence can not act much beyond the convictions of the people. These convictions must be informed by facts. In the complexities of contemporary foreign policy ignorance has become tantamount to criminal negligence.

**S**INCE our power is derived from our wealth it would seem that wealth and power are identical. We must, however, consider some of the problems separately which are occasioned by our wealth, even when it is not transmuted into military and political power. Our nation enjoys living standards that are roughly two to three times as high as those of the European nations, and five to ten times as high as those of the Asian nations. This wealth is a

tremendous hazard to our moral prestige throughout the world. It not only tempts others to envy but it gives a certain plausibility to the communist charge of "capitalistic exploitation." This charge is not well founded because our wealth does not even depend upon a great percentage of foreign trade. We have a more nearly self-sufficient continental economy than any other nation. Our wealth is due primarily to the high degree of efficiency of our technics and of our whole industrial enterprise. Other nations may approach our efficiency, but our continental economy, permitting mass production and lowered costs, gives us an advantage over even the most efficient of other nations. Thus our good fortune, gained with a minimum of injustice to others, makes us appear as Dives in a poverty-stricken world.

This great disparity in wealth is one of the greatest detractions from our moral prestige in the world. It is second only to our possession of the hydrogen bomb in its effect upon our prestige. The problems with which our wealth confronts us are chiefly two. The first is to use that wealth in the world community in a way sufficiently generous to support the weaker nations, yet to make no claims to generosity. This requires a good deal of moral imagination. We must be generous, not in the sense of "sharing" our wealth (for that policy is ultimately abortive) but in supporting all the military and economic policies designed to preserve the health and unity of the free world. Yet we must not make claims to generosity or expect

gratitude for our policies. Prudence alone would dictate this restraint, for even the most generous actions are sufficiently in accord with our national interest to be regarded by the world as prompted by prudence rather than generosity. Furthermore the disparity of wealth is so great that a generous gesture from our perspective will not seem generous to the recipient.

**W**e must, furthermore, recognize that all financial relations between us and our allies are judged in the light of the "dollar gap"; that is, of the inability of the world to sell as much to us as it is forced to buy. This dollar gap has many causes but the most potent one is our tariff barriers to foreign trade. These are being gradually lowered but not fast enough to keep our European allies from being tempted to impatience because they must accept "aid," not trade. Naturally, they have their own estimates of the generosity of this aid. The fact is that the complexities of the problem of our wealth and the world's poverty are so great that all simple moral judgments about the problem, whether expressed by ourselves or by our critics, tend to be irrelevant.

The other problem with which our wealth confronts us is not so much moral and political as spiritual. It has to do with the charges levelled by our critics, chiefly the French, and with our own uneasy feeling that our prosperity is due not merely to the efficiency of our production but to our preoccupation with technics and the economic

goals of life. We speak affectionately and even reverently of the "American way of life"; and we regard freedom and justice as the chief virtue of that "way"; but we also think of good plumbing as an integral part of it. In short, we can not hide from ourselves, and certainly can not deny the charge of our critics, that our "civilization" may be so impressive because our "culture" is defective when judged by the standards of culture in general.

### The Discipline of Religion

**W**e live by a religious faith which affirms that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he posseseth." Such a faith pressed too consistently may lead to an ascetic life denial or at least to a denial of the ordinary comforts of life. But it may be questioned whether our culture has not lost that essential religious reservation about the *goals* of life which prevent a too great preoccupation with the *goods* of life. It is difficult to see how this trend in our culture can be reversed even by the most potent religious revival; and it is equally questionable whether such a reversal would be serviceable either to ourselves or to the world at this juncture of history. It must be remembered that most of our critics would like to have some of the comforts and dimensions of natural well-being for which they criticize us!

It is probably idle to hope for the reversal of so strong a cultural trend as our preoccupation with technics. The best we can hope for is that the wealth so acquired will be dedicated

to the task of giving strength to the free community of nations. If we could say, "God be thanked who matched us with this hour"; if we could be thrilled with our historic opportunities and cease to regret our burdens as involving high taxes; and if we could realize that our burdens are an opportunity to make our wealth sufferable to our conscience and tolerable to our friends —then we would redeem even that part of our culture which our critics may deem least honorable.

#### **"A Moment to Decide"**

WE ARE living in a grand and awful period of history in which every illusion, nourished in past centuries, has brought forth its evil fruits; in which every new power developed by man, particularly in his conquest of nature, re-

veals its capacity for both good and evil; and in which the highest possibilities are inextricably intermingled with the most dire perils.

There are no certain climaxes of history since every conceivable climax may, for all we know, be succeeded by a more vivid one. But compared with the past we are certainly living in the most impressive climax of history, judged both quantitatively and qualitatively. Our nation has been destined to play a very responsible role in this climax. Our decisions can become fateful for the very survival of our civilization. In this historical context, it is important to draw upon every resource in our several faiths, in our tradition, and in our immediate vitalities so that we will not "meanly lose but nobly save the last best hope of earth."

## **Discussion Outline for the Work Paper**

***By F. Ernest Johnson***

The suggestions that follow are designed to facilitate discussion of the Work Paper. An attempt is made to focus attention not only on points where agreement may be expected, but also on provocative statements that some persons may be disposed to challenge. The order in which the subject matter is presented in the Work Paper has been changed in this Discussion Guide for the purpose of grouping the issues.

It is assumed that each participant in the Consultation will have read the Work Paper before attempting to use the Guide.

### **I. WHAT ARE OUR MORAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES?**

1. The author speaks of our Judeo-Christian tradition. Let us think of some of the values in this heritage that make for cooperation between nations.
  - a. Do we agree that equality is one such value? What do we mean by it? That all people *are* equal? That they should have equal opportunity? That every person has an equal claim with every other

person to the opportunity his potentialities call for? Or something else?

- b. We talk much of brotherhood—something that is clearly related to equality. Where did we get the idea? How well do we practice it? Does it operate across national boundaries?
- c. What are some of the obstacles to the practice of brotherhood at home and across national frontiers? Are they mostly of a physical kind, such as language differences, geographical separation, or mainly of a psychological kind, including preconceived ideas of others, feelings of superiority, a kind of patriotism that excludes international brotherhood, and the like?

2. Freedom is today a word to conjure with. Mr. Niebuhr speaks, as we all do, of the "free world." Is some critical inspection called for here?
  - a. Are we agreed as to what freedom means? Some people think chiefly in economic terms: free enterprise. Is this the basic concept? Others think of civil liberties—freedom from this and that form of restraint. What do *we* mean by it? If we agree on what we mean by freedom, do our practices support this concept?
  - b. Granting that by comparison with the totalitarian world the West is free, are there serious evidences of "unfreedom" among us? Would it be well to take an inventory in this connection?
3. What have we to say about our institutional spiritual resources? We may note in particular:
  - a. Our churches and synagogues. Their membership has now reached an all-time high. How shall we reconcile this with current complaints of declining moral standards and cultural breakdown? How valid are these complaints? What is their chief source?
  - b. Our schools. Should we regard our schools, public and private, as a major spiritual resource? Are there observable defects in this respect? What issues arise here?
  - c. Our multitudinous voluntary agencies for the cultivation of common values and the pursuit of common social goals. Is voluntarism, in its many manifestations through nongovernmental organizations, a significant spiritual resource? Are there outstanding examples? Is more interreligious cooperation indicated?
4. The author makes a point of including secular knowledge and skills, especially developments in technology and modern communication, among our spiritual resources. Perhaps this is one of the most significant aspects of Mr. Niebuhr's analysis. From a biblical point of view, the secular is not evil; rather, it is an instrumentality for creative spiritual activity. Two questions arise:
  - a. Does our Western culture tend grievously to separate the sacred and the secular, exempting the realms of business, industry, and politics, for example, from the ethical sanctions which our several faiths have sought to maintain?

- b. If so, what is indicated by way of remedy? Is the impact of Christian missions on non-Christian cultures a factor in this situation? And how about the influence of Americans residing abroad?
- 5. No search for spiritual resources can avoid the question, Is human nature basically good or basically evil? Modern education tends to call it good. Biblical theology warns of the capacity for evil in man's nature. The depth psychologies give the theologians no little support at this point. Perhaps most social scientists would say that in ethical terms human nature is neutral—potentially both good and evil. The issue emerging in our Work Paper, with respect to the world situation, presents two aspects:
  - a. Are human nature and human institutions perfectible within the historical process? That is to say, is social utopianism a valid goal? This is the challenge presented by the secular utopian dream of communism, but is it not also implicit in the idea of progress as a natural historical process? Here the biblical philosophy of history seems to run counter to contemporary assumptions.
  - b. Mr. Niebuhr calls communism a "demonic politic-religious movement." If we share with the communists an "illusion" of inevitable progress toward Utopia does this weaken our case against communism? This is the most direct theological challenge in the Work Paper, and discussion should make the most of its provocative character. Our several faiths maintain, as against secular assumptions, that man's ultimate spiritual resource is found in God, and in man himself only as he realizes his creaturely dependence on God. Every Consultation group is bound to include persons to whom this conception offers difficulty. What do *we* believe about human progress?

## II. FACING POLITICAL REALITIES

- 1. How does America look through European and Asian eyes? Is the resentment commonly complained of just jealousy, or is some of it justified? If "all power tends to corrupt" how can we Americans guard against the evil effect of our enormously preponderant power?
- 2. How can a nation upon which international leadership has fallen exercise its role in view of the admitted strength of national self-interest? Is foreign policy really bound up with domestic policy? Is Mr. Niebuhr's idea of expanding this self-interest by taking a "long-run" perspective practicable? (This is an example of "realism without cynicism." Without the insights of our historic faiths, says Mr. Niebuhr, "realism may degenerate into cynicism and idealism into sentimentality.")
- 3. Are we in danger of too great a preoccupation with our "free-world" leadership? (President Eisenhower prefers "partnership." Are we prepared to pay the price of partnership?) A noted columnist has written, "America alone bears the torch." How do other people regard Ameri-

can leadership? When does patriotism turn into idolatry? To many people "internationalism" has become a bad word. Can we take Mr. Niebuhr's position and still be patriotic?

4. To what extent have we in America taken account of the "revolutionary ferment" so evident in Asia and Africa? And of the fact that most of the world's people are colored and also underprivileged? And of the extreme unlikelihood that the Western political and economic system which we tend to take for granted can be "exported" either by military power or by diplomacy—assuming that we might attempt it? How can we promote change peaceably? Should we be more active on the "cultural front"?
5. Pressing this question further, are we counting too heavily on military power to combat the communist "imperium"? Granting that poverty conditions a people toward revolution, how account for the strength of the communist appeal to intellectuals, the amazing discipline accepted by "party-liners," and the missionary zeal of communist youth? Do we really "know our enemy"? Mr. Niebuhr sees international communism as something much more than a politico-economic conspiracy. What are our most dependable resources for combatting communism?
6. The pacifist solution of the world crisis is sharply challenged in this Work Paper. To the familiar—and usually unanswered—argument that preparation for war leads to war, and the more preparation the fiercer war, it is asserted that the H-bomb is actually "relaxing" world tensions. In other words, what a moral judgment upon war has thus far failed to do is apparently being accomplished by fear of mutual annihilation. What are the ethical and practical implications of this rather startling statement?
7. Political realities at the international level have limited the recognition given to religious beliefs and institutions which play so large a part in the life of the "free world." Many people are criticizing the UN, and UNESCO in particular, on the ground that they are negative toward religion. Is there any validity in the criticism—in spite of the antireligious philosophy of the communist member states? Granted the limits set by political realism, does *cultural* realism call for recognition of the role of religion in human affairs?
8. Finally, it is to be hoped that discussion will be directed toward the knotty problem, introduced by Mr. Niebuhr, of reconciling two opposing forces within our culture: our spiritual ideal of disciplined consumption of goods and services, and the dependence of an expanding economy on *more and more consumption*. The latter is of a piece with "our preoccupation with technics." Mr. Niebuhr suggests that our surplus wealth should be "dedicated to the task of giving strength to the free community of nations." Two questions arise: Are we up to it, ethically? and, How can we implement it practically?

# WORKSHOP

Edited by  
Herman F. Reissig

## For Exciting Discussion

This issue of SOCIAL ACTION carries one of the most searching articles the magazine has published. The title alone—"America's Spiritual Resources for International Cooperation"—ought to make a Christian citizen feel that this is something he wants to read. And this is Reinhold Niebuhr at his best. Our editor, Ernest Johnson, has added a keen Discussion Outline — which means that our readers have something very good indeed for use in all kinds of discussion groups. WORKSHOP suggests that you think seriously about ways to use the article in your church. It goes without saying that ministers will find in it stimulation and material for sermons. Without even intimating that you should agree with every statement Dr. Niebuhr makes, I would like to offer the opinion that if you and I were to accept and help to spread around his analysis of our country's position in the world situation we would make an important contribution to a happier world.

## Hats Off to This Church!

The editor of WORKSHOP recently spent a Sunday in the Central Square Congregational Church,

Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Among other signs of vitality, he learned that this church has in its annual budget an item providing for no less than \$300 for helping its members attend institutes and seminars. And this is in addition to whatever may be spent in sending young people to summer conferences. With the pastoral leadership of the Reverend Robert Mayhew and with key members constantly picking up ideas and inspiration in state and national institutes — including, of course, social action institutes—one may have some confidence that the Central Square Church of Bridgewater is building a really creative Christian fellowship. Bob Mayhew has just finished his term as a CSA director. Why shouldn't I add that it was a great pleasure to hear from the manufacturer who was my host the warmest kind of tribute to his minister's leadership?

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## For Ministers Only

The last sentence in the foregoing paragraph suggests an observation which is here made with some hesitation. But the denominational secretary who writes this was for more than fifteen years a parish minister and has some understanding of a pastor's problems, as well as a fairly lively appreciation of the fact that we secretaries can, so to speak, hit and run, while the pastor *loci* must try to fit the summonses to do this and that into the actual circumstances of his parish. Nevertheless, three or four lay people whom I have recently queried on obstacles to social action progress in the local church all said the same thing. They said the highest hurdle is more apt to be the minister than the lay members. Whether this is true or not, it certainly is the case in some churches. There are many reasons. Let us take space here to make two suggestions. First, some ministers see the need and are willing to go ahead but, not being sure just how to proceed, indefinitely postpone organization for social action. The suggestion is that you write to the CSA for materials on "how to begin," put this into the hands of one or two of your best people and see if you can't get them to take the lead. Second, if the minister suspects his people would not support systematic study and action on social issues it would seem wise to make very sure of this before bypassing a possible opportunity to add something really helpful to the church life. Why not invite a few people to spend an evening talking it over? There is one fact that cannot be

denied. In many of our churches there are men and women who are looking, sometimes almost unconsciously, for the sort of thing social action stands for, and keenly feel the absence of it in their church.

## In Plymouth Church, Minneapolis

Plymouth Forum, they call it. It is an official organization of the church, sponsored by the deacons, for the study of problems related to Christianity and the social order. Dr. Howard Conn, Plymouth's minister, writes that the forum "has developed into more of an action than study group." Since the spring of 1955 the forum has had three sub-groups—actively at work on specific projects: (1) recreational activity for underprivileged children in the immediate neighborhood; (2) the sponsorship of a displaced person's family; (3) sponsorship of a recreational program in the church building for American Indians.

Many more of our churches should have such forums. And if the forum can be sponsored by the deacons, so much the better. Sometimes it will be a good project for the social action committee. The question has been asked rather insistently in WORKSHOP, and will continue to be asked: "Where do the members of your church, men and women, have a regular chance to discuss the application of their faith to social problems?" In impatient moments one feels like crying out that the absence in most churches of such provision makes the church life downright undemocratic. Why should the minister be the only one

who has the opportunity to speak his piece "in the presence of the congregation"? Dr. Conn would probably be willing to tell you more about Plymouth Forum if you care to write him (1900 Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis 3, Minnesota). This writer has also had some experience with the small church forum.

### **For Your Calendar**

Not too early to begin to plan your own or other people's attendance at the annual Framingham (Massachusetts) Social Action Institute, July 24-28; the Chicago Institute, September 10-14; the World Order and United Nations Seminar in New York, October 15-17. All three offer great bargains at very low prices.

### **Want to Go Along?**

"Do It!" most people say, when we talk about the CSA European Study and Travel Seminar and ask if they'd like to go. You received the announcement of the 1956 seminar with last month's **WORKSHOP**. Inevitably, much attention will be given to our inclusion of the Soviet Union in the itinerary. But even apart from the twelve days in that always fascinating, sometimes baffling, sometimes maddening country, there will be much to keep us on tip-toe in France (a country that almost breaks your heart when you think of its immense contributions, its wonderful people, and its present problems); in Germany (bursting with energy and tragically divided); in Finland (remember Sibelius and other musicians and the heroic resistance to invasion a few

years ago?); in Sweden (that country of "the middle way" and bracing air and beautiful cities); in the Netherlands (where this writer is "crazy" to spend a few days); in England (where the socialists make changes for which the Tories try to claim credit).

If you can't go, perhaps your pastor would love it and profit by it, if he could get a little help with the expense. Date of departure from New York, June 30. Date of return, August 7. Cost, \$1595. All tips and other necessary expenses included. Apply early. All travel by air.

### **It's Going to be Good**

Since this staff member had little to do with its preparation, he may be permitted to say that the CSA packet on civil liberties is going to be full of good things. You can use it for individual reading, if you have no discussion group. Ministers ought to have it. Some excellent material for use in worship is a feature. One dollar sent to 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York, will bring it to you.

### **The UN in Your Church**

During 1956 we propose to say often that the international relations department of the CSA would be glad to help you plan a United Nations Institute in your church. (If you don't actually have your copies of **WORKSHOP** bound we hope you keep them around somewhere, partly because we think they may be useful and partly because we can't bear the thought of their being in a wastebasket. The January issue described in detail an in-

stitute presented in Appleton, Wisconsin). If you feel a little stirring of interest, just write a letter and we'll work together on it. Or you might prefer to have an institute on international affairs in general. Let's stop merely wishing for peace or complaining about the state of things, and make a little positive contribution!

### **Lively Time in Veradale**

"I feel that this particular Social Action Committee has done an outstanding piece of work in planning, publicizing, and presenting this series." So writes Mrs. Theron Zimmerman in reporting on a series of "Study Night" programs held in the Congregational Church at Veradale, Washington. The topic was "Christians in a Revolutionary World." Harvey L. Young, M.D., chaired the three panel discussions. Dr. Young, a busy physician, "must," wrote Mrs. Zimmerman, "have spent considerable time studying the entire packet before meeting with his committee to outline the series." Other chairmen, please take note! That's the way to do it when you are introducing one of the CSA packets. And then the promotion! With the series scheduled for October, the first announcement went out in August; it was followed by another in September. Result of all this: excellent discussions, beginning and ending on time, and a good attendance.

### **No Headline Here**

My impulse was to head this paragraph, "By golly!" It didn't seem

likely to get by the blue pencil of *Social Action's* editor; so the headline is transferred to the first sentence, with the hope that the editor won't notice it. Anyhow, when I read the first report of the new social action committee in Old First Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, I said, "By golly!" Last fall this committee laid out a program of activities, listing from one to seven items for every month right through to next May. For example:

"December—

1. Plans for gifts to be sent to
  - a) Framingham Prison for Women
  - b) Mental hospitals
2. Trip to United Nations

"January—

1. Study new legislation—special interest in prison legislation and housing."

It would be interesting to publish the whole program—as an example of thoughtful planning. "This committee," says the report, "consists of one member from each church organization and the ministers. They are to alert and report back to their separate organizations the work of this committee and the social issues discussed. We are fortunate to have on the committee a deacon, a school teacher, a social worker, a man from the Better Business Bureau, and a brilliant high school student." The chairman is Ina B. Allen. Good luck to you in Old First Church! WORKSHOP, speaking on behalf of the entire social action family, hopes you will go on from strength to strength.

# How Your Money Multiplies

\$600-\$1,000 releases a pastor or church leader for part-time social action leadership in a state conference, as is the case now in New Hampshire, Connecticut, Middle Atlantic, Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa, Indiana, Oregon, Maine.

\$250 prepares one of the four program packets used by over 2,000 people during the past year. Current packets deal with Indian Affairs, Christians in a Revolutionary World, Our Daily Work, Christian Faith and Freedom.

\$100 sends one monthly issue of *Workshop* to 5,300 local, state, and national social action committee members, helping to stimulate them to concrete, effective study and action in their church and community.

\$25 makes it possible to send another potential leader to a Training Institute in 1956, such as the ones to be held at Framingham, Massachusetts, July 24-28; and at Chicago Theological Seminary, September 10-14; or to the World Order Seminar at the United Nations to be held October 15-17; or to the Washington Churchmen's Seminar, February 7-10. The summer study seminar to Europe is self-supporting.

\$5 gives you a year's subscription to *Social Action* and pays the CSA subsidy for your subscription and for two other subscribers. Your gift helps others secure authoritative analyses of current issues such as civil liberties, American responsibility for world need, and racial integration in the Churches.

*Why not multiply your money?*

*Send your check to: Robert Marshall, Treasurer*

**Council for Social Action**

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